

**RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

NOTE: This directive is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be constructed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

Chapter 9	Number 7	Effective Date 09/08/08	Review Date 2011
Subject GEOCAST NOTIFICATION SYSTEM (REVERSE 911)			☒ New Order ☐ Replaces
References			
 _____ Chief of Police or Designee		09/08/08 _____ Date	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures governing the use of the Dialogic Communications Corporation (DCC) GEOCAST notification system. This system is known as the City of Richmond Emergency Notification System (ENS). The ENS is capable of simultaneously transmitting notifications to multiple individuals or groups defined by predetermined geographic locations via a prerecorded message.

The primary application of the ENS is to facilitate the flow of information to the community regarding local emergency situations, crime and/or public safety alerts, homeland security information and announcements related to public safety events.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to provide the highest level of service attainable to the public through efficient and effective information exchange.

III. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines set forth in this general order. Failure to comply will result in appropriate corrective action. Responsibility rests with the Division Commander to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and appropriate training, counseling and/or disciplinary action is initiated.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. GEOCAST – A computerized Geographical Information System (GIS) based notification system that has the capability of notifying all published telephone numbers within a selected geographic area.
- B. GIS – A computer system capable of capturing, storing, analyzing and displaying geographically referenced information.
- C. SCENARIO – The setup necessary to send a notification, which includes who is being notified (neighborhoods, schools, sector areas, precinct areas, etc.)
- D. SCRIPT – The text of the message to be sent.
- E. TEXT-TO-SPEECH – Computerized process by which the text of the message is converted to speech.
- F. ACTIVATOR – An authorized person trained to set up and activate the notification system.
- G. EMERGENCY SUBSCRIBER LIST (ESL) – A data set provided by Verizon Communications, Inc. that provides the telephone numbers of all hardwired telephone subscribers in the City of Richmond. By contract with Verizon, this data set can be used ONLY to notify subscribers about an emergency situation.
- H. INFOCODE DATA SET – A company that provides geocoding services for emergency notification systems. The InfoCode Data Set contains the telephone numbers of all published telephone numbers in the City of Richmond.
- I. EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS – Messages sent out to the community that are meant to inform the public and the news media of events or situations that directly affect the lives and safety of citizens in the community. Examples include missing children, HAZMAT incidents and SWAT missions. The Verizon ESL will be used to make these notifications.
- J. COMMUNITY NOTIFICATIONS – Messages sent out to the community to inform the public of police related information and/or police activity in the community. Examples include crime activity, missing persons and Police Department meetings. The InfoCode Data Set will be used to make these notifications.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Activation Procedures:
 - 1. The Division of Emergency Communications (DEC) is responsible for the activation of Emergency Notifications for all City Departments. In the Police Department, Emergency Notifications can be authorized by any supervisor holding the rank of Lieutenant or above. Emergency Notifications will be activated as soon as possible.

2. DEC is responsible for the activation of Community Notifications for the Police Department. Community Notifications can be authorized by any supervisor who is a Divisional Commander or above. Whenever practical, Community Notifications should be requested a minimum of 48 hours in advance.
 3. A PD-165, Message Activation Form, must be completed before any activation will be initiated. DEC shall maintain a logbook of all activations conducted by the Police Department.
 4. It is the responsibility of the person requesting the activation to script the message being sent. All messages will be prefaced with the phrase, "This is a message from the Richmond Police Department."
 5. The amount of time it takes to complete an activation of the system is dependent upon two factors:
 - a) The length of the message; and,
 - b) The number of telephone numbers to be contacted.
 6. After completion of any notification, the completed PD-165 must be placed in the logbook maintained by Police Public Affairs Unit.
- B. Access to the Notification System and Training:
- Only qualified personnel will be authorized to access to the notification system and it will be password protected. All authorized personnel must attend a brief training session prior to being issued a User ID and password.

VI. ROLES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. All authorized personnel shall:
- Attend a notification system training session prior to being issued a User ID and password for access to the notification system.
- B. DEC/Activator shall:
1. Be responsible for the activation of Emergency Notifications for all City Departments;
 2. Be responsible for the activation of Community Notifications for the Police Department;
 3. Attend a notification system training session prior to being issued an User ID and password for access to the notification system; and,
 4. Maintain a logbook of all activations conducted by the Police Department.
- C. Police Supervisors holding the rank of Lieutenant or above shall:

1. Be authorized to make Emergency Notifications; and,
 2. Activate Emergency Notifications as soon as possible.
- D. Supervisors who are designated as Divisional Commanders or above shall:
1. Have the authority to authorize Community Notifications;
 2. Request Community Notifications a minimum of 48 hours in advance, whenever practical;
 3. Complete a PD-165, Message Activation Form, before any activation will be initiated;
 4. Script the activation message prior to forwarding the message to DEC. All messages will be prefaced with the phrase, "This is a message from the Richmond Police Department;" and,
 5. Forward completed PD-165 to the Police Department's Public Affairs Unit.
- E. Public Affairs Unit shall:
- Maintain completed PD-165, Message Activation Form, in the logbook.

VII. FORMS

PD-165, Message Activation Form